

The Pan-Pacific Entomologist

VOL. XIII, No. 4

October, 1937

DR. ADALBERT FENYES

BY H. C. FALL

Tyngsboro, Mass.

On a morning in early spring in the year 1897 there called at my door in Pasadena, California, a gentleman of pleasing personality, who, though speaking English perfectly, spoke it with a slight accent that indicated a foreign nativity. He introduced himself as one interested in entomology, and said he had been directed thither by the city librarian. My visitor became so enthusiastic over what I had to show him that instead of continuing on a world tour with his wife as projected they decided to remain awhile in Pasadena and to that end rented a beautiful home on Orange Grove Ave. for an indefinite residence. This was my first meeting with Dr. Fenyes, the subject of this sketch, and the beginning of a close and cordial intimacy which lasted throughout the twenty remaining years of my residence in Pasadena.

Dr. Adalbert Fenyes was born in Arad, Hungary, Nov. 17th, 1863. His father, Carolus Fényes, was an attorney and of noble birth. Dr. Fenyes was an honor graduate of the University of Vienna; he was at the Court of Emperor Franz Joseph as an officer in the Army Reserve, being a physician. In 1893 he went to Cairo, Egypt, where he practiced medicine for several years, associating there with the highest potentates of the city. It was here that he met his first wife, a New York lady, whom he married in Florence, and with whom he was making a world tour when his trip was interrupted at Pasadena as I have mentioned above.

Dr. Fenyes was always a great nature lover and in his early years was a devotee of Ornithology, but he had already become a confirmed Entomologist before coming to America.

Once established in Pasadena the Doctor immediately procured the necessary equipment and began systematic collecting in the vicinity. Within a short time he brought me specimens of two rare Melyrids, *Microlipus prolixicornis* Fall and *Listrus*

definitus Fall, previously unknown and so far as I know not since taken by any other collector. His crowning discovery however came several years later when he turned up on Mount Wilson specimens of that large and handsome Eucnemid *Palaeoxenus dohrni* Horn, which, though said to have been found at San Diego, was believed by its describer to have really come from tropical America.

For a good many years Dr. Fenyés made extensive collecting trips to various parts of the country and to Mexico. By this means and by exchange and purchase he rapidly amassed a very large general collection, including much exotic material; also a valuable library, both being housed in a fireproof building erected for the purpose. About 1905 he began a special study of the Staphylinid tribe Aleocharinæ. He devoted himself to this work with so much energy and success that in ten years he became recognized as a world authority on this difficult group and was asked to prepare the manuscript thereon for the Wytzman Genera Insectorum. Aside from this monumental task he published about a dozen short papers on his specialty. Moreover at the time he ceased all activity in Entomology, some ten years or more ago, he had completed the manuscript and drawn the plates, containing 766 accurately colored figures, for a monograph of the North American Aleocharinæ, a work of such magnitude that no publisher at the time could accept it, and it now passes with his collection into the custody of the California Academy of Sciences.

Dr. Fenyés continued the practice of his profession in Pasadena. He was a pioneer in the use of the X-ray for medical purposes and installed in his office the first X-ray machine to be brought to that city. In recognition of his work in this field he was made an honorary member of the American Medical Society.

After ceasing active work in Entomology he took up gardening as a hobby, specializing in the raising of fine carnations, importing seeds from England and developing specimens that attracted the attention of horticultural experts. He also gave much time in later years to music.

Highly educated, an accomplished linguist, a distinguished physician, a world famed entomologist, an ardent horticulturalist,

a connoisseur in music; truly a remarkably versatile man, and withal a gentleman of the finest type.

Dr. Fenyes died February 22nd, 1937, after a short illness. His second wife, Louise Hiller Fenyes, whom he married May 14, 1930, survives him. He left no children.

Dr. Fenyes' large collection of Coleoptera, numbering around seventy-five thousand specimens, both native and exotic, as well as his library and all his manuscript have been purchased by the California Academy of Sciences and removed to San Francisco. His specialized collection of Aleocharinæ, included in the above, comprises some nineteen hundred species and 19,600 specimens from all quarters of the globe, and is probably unequalled in any other collection in the world. The California Academy is certainly to be congratulated in securing this extremely valuable material.

UBER ENTOMOLOGISCHE SAMMLUNGEN

The third part of this work, under the editorship of Dr. Walter Horn of the Deutsches Entomologisches Institut at Berlin-Dahlem, has just been published, August 1, 1937. This brings the work to completion, making a volume of 536 pages of text and 38 plates. In this most useful publication are given in alphabetical order, the names of all entomologists, present and past, who have assembled collections of insects of any extent, together with the places where these collections are deposited. The plates give reproductions of characteristic labels of all important entomologists. In addition the third part gives some few short biographies, remarks concerning insect collections and discusses the question of the future of systematic entomology.

The work is a splendid one with a great amount of important data concerning the collections of the world which has been painstakingly assembled by Dr. Horn and his assistants, over a period of many years. No student of entomology who wishes to know something of the collections of the world, where they are to be found, or get an idea of the individual manner of labeling or characteristic autography, can afford to be without this most useful publication.—Edwin C. Van Dyke.